

STELLA VERGINA INDIA

Stella has over 34 years' experience in nursing. She initially trained as a nurse in the Armed Forces at the Military Hospital Secunderabad and Jhansi, being commissioned as a Lieutenant in 1986. After leaving the Army in 1992 she worked in private hospitals and then worked for the Ministry of Health Libya and the Ministry of Health Sultanate of Oman. She then worked in the Government medical college Kozhikode in Kerala from 2006 until she retired earlier this year.

Stella first started training in palliative nursing in 2007 when she undertook a basic certificate course in palliative nursing, and has followed this with various palliative care trainings including the ELNEC and EPEC courses. She undertook a National Fellowship in Palliative Nursing in 2015-2016 and is a trainer for both the ELNEC and EPEC courses. When working at the Medical College Calicut she provided nursing care and psycho-social care to patients and empowered the patient and family, providing a specialized service in lymphoedema, colostomies, and malignant and other chronic wound care.

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palliative care, receiving numerous certificates of appreciation and recognition. In 2020 she was awarded an international award for excellence and leadership in palliative nursing. Within India she has presented regularly at the Indian Association of Palliative Care conference, both as part of the faculty but also through abstract submission. She has also had the opportunity to present at several other international conferences and has taken a lead role in training nursing and medical professionals, volunteers and campus students in palliative care throughout India. She also conducted workshops to empower and educate families and patients about lymphoedema care, care of the bedridden patient and communication skills.

She is recognised in India as a leader, both in palliative care and in nursing, and has been a member of the Central Council for the Indian Association of Palliative Care, taking a lead on nursing issues. Stella is committed to building capacity for palliative care in India for nurses, but also for health professionals in general, and has been involved in national initiatives to develop training programmes such as the development of a facilitator guide/ training manual for training

doctors and nurses under the National Programme in Palliative Care.

Her many achievements within palliative care include: the compilation of the modified manual for the basic certificate course in palliative nursing; participating in the national consultation for creation of palliative care curriculum for undergraduate medical and nursing students, and for training physicians; being the lead author on several chapters and training modules, including the module on nursing issues for the one-year National Fellowship in Palliative Medicine and Nursing; and part of the core committee developing the curriculum for the basic certificate course in community nursing and palliative care in Kerala.

Since retiring from her government post, she has been involved in delivering online training and case discussions for doctors, nurses and nursing students, organised by a collaboration including the Indian Association of Palliative Care, Pallium India, Cipla training centre, Lien collaborative for palliative care and others.